

## **Project Abstract**

As the understanding of literacy development evolves through research and practice, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is deeply committed to supporting each learner, birth through grade 12, in their acquisition of this essential competency. This strong dedication to educational excellence and effectiveness is demonstrated through the recent adoption of the *2010 Common Core State Standards* and the development of the Rhode Island Department of Education's Strategic Plan, *Transforming Education in Rhode Island*. Led by the State Literacy Team and an internal RIDE advisory, now known as the RISRCLP Advisory Team, the quest to improve students' literacy achievement continues with the submission of Rhode Island's application for Striving Readers' Comprehensive Literacy Program funds.

This proposed plan of action represents the alignment among the additional requirements of the Striving Readers program, the state's Comprehensive Literacy Plan, and the proposed priorities for activities to be supported by Striving Readers funding. Detailed within the narrative and budget, these priorities have been translated into activities that include effective professional development that supports literacy development and sustained training for several different stakeholders; expansion of schools' and programs' assessment systems to a comprehensive model; and implementation of 21<sup>st</sup> century interventions based on analyses of student data and the principles of Universal Design.

In accordance with federal absolute priority #1, school readiness and success through grade 12 in the area of language and literacy development for disadvantaged students are central to Rhode Island's proposed project. Several of these literacy goals, including annual performance targets, articulated in RIDE's *Strategic Education Plan* have been adopted as project goals -

establishing additional performance measures would serve a cross-purpose. The RIDE-established reading and gap reduction goals for grades 4, 8, and 11 have been expanded to include the GPRA requirements articulated in the federal application:

- percentage of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students who meet or exceed proficiency on the NECAP (state) reading and writing assessments
- percentage of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who meet or exceed proficiency on the NECAP (state) writing assessment
- percentage of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who meet or exceed proficiency on the NECAP (state) writing assessment
- reduction of the reading performance gap between non-LEP and LEP students
- percentage of participating 4-year-old children who achieve significant gains in oral language skills.

At the K-12 level more than eight hundred teachers, administrators, and support staff will participate in RISRCLP activities. This number represents a minimum of sixteen schools, dependent upon the number and size of successful sub-grant applicant schools. Estimating the number of participants at the early education (birth – age 5) level is more difficult. A local-control state with no universal pre-K, Rhode Island has many private and independent programs and centers. Proposed activities for this level include initiatives that will impact the state’s entire preschool and childcare population - teachers, parents and children.